

While the building is, itself, an historic, stately church and provides a beautiful place to worship, it is the people themselves, the congregants, that make Zion Lutheran a real natural treasure.

With 965 members, Zion Lutheran is the largest Lutheran church in Blair County. Leading the congregation is no small task, and its pastors, the Reverends Scott and Carol Custead, are the latest in a long line of God's servants who have provided the community with religious guidance that has brought stability and hope through God's teachings.

The word "Zion" literally means "the dwelling place of God, where God meets His people." It gives me great honor to recognize Zion Lutheran Church in Hollidaysburg on its bicentennial, a place where God truly meets His followers.

□ 2030

#### GOP RUNS ROUGHSHOD OVER TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida.) Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BELL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to take this opportunity, because I did not get an opportunity to do so before, to thank several individuals for standing strong in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Representatives Garnett Coleman, Senfronia Thompson, Joe Deshotel, Joe Moreno, Scott Hochberg, Jessica Farrar, Rick Noriega, and Dora Olivo. I just want you to know that the people of Texas are with you, and we are thinking of you here in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS).

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to review after this hour-long debate we have just finished why virtually every major newspaper in Texas is editorialized in saying that "what Mr. DELAY is trying to do in forcing a partisan redistricting plan down the throats of 20 million Texas citizens is wrong."

First they admit and say that what he does diverts the legislature's attention from huge problems facing Texas. A \$10 billion deficit, hundreds of thousands of children being thrown off the CHIPs health care program, school finance, it is important to parents all across our State. The editorials are right; the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is wrong.

The secret back-room deals that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) and Texas Speaker Tom Craddick would rip apart historic communities of interest, and they have orchestrated a process that only the Keystone Cops could admire and have drawn a bizarre map that would give modern art a bad name.

Let me be specific. First the process. Texas Republican legislators refused to

have hearings across Texas, thus violating the legislature's own 2001 guidelines for seeking broad Texas citizen input into something as important as congressional redistricting. Finally, the one hearing they did have was in the Texas capital, but you know what? It started about 9 p.m. on Friday night a few weeks ago, did not finish until 6:30 a.m. on Saturday morning, with some of the capitol doors locking Texas citizens out of those hearings in the dark of the night.

Now, the Texas House redistricting committee then started playing the old rope-a-dope game coming up with new plans almost daily, kind of a map du jour to confuse Texas citizens so they would not know which maps were seriously being considered. And, even worse, the House committee chairman had the gall to say that he did not want to have hearings in south Texas because he could not understand Spanish. What a rather crude insult to the millions of Hispanic English-speaking citizens of south Texas.

Finally, the Mother's Day massacre plan. Last Sunday, while Texans, including myself, were honoring our families and our mothers, the forces of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) had a different idea that day. They concocted a map for Texas congressional redistricting that no one had ever seen, not a single Texas elected mayor, city councilman, school board member, not any of the 20 million of Texas citizens. Their plan was slick. It was at 10 a.m. the next morning, this past Monday morning, less than 24 hours after that map was put on one Website with no press announcements, they were going to shove that map down the throats of the Texas House.

I admire Representative Jim Dunnam and John Mabry from Waco, because had they not stood up and broken that quorum, the people of central Texas and our historic rural central Texas district would have been devastated: one district carved into four congressional districts stretching from Fort Worth to the suburbs of Houston to San Antonio.

The process has been wrong, the map is wrong, and I admire these Texas profiles in courage for saying 20 million Texas citizens should not be shut out of having their voices heard when it comes to shaping the future of their communities for decades to come.

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SANDLIN).

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to say thank you to all of my Texas colleagues who joined us tonight. This has been a wonderful debate and examination of the issues.

Mr. Speaker, the glorious history of Texas records many brave events like the Battle of Goliad and the Alamo. But the most important of all is the Battle of San Jacinto where General Sam Houston picked his battlefield, surprised his enemy, and prevailed for the people.

Today that battlefield is Ardmore, Oklahoma, where over 50 representatives are fighting for the rights of their constituents. They have clearly surprised the enemy and, God willing, those 50 for Texas will prevail for the people of our great State.

#### COMMEMORATING THE 49TH ANNIVERSARY OF BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to begin the Congressional Black Caucus Special Order to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

Mr. Speaker, the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision is one of the greatest decisions of the United States Supreme Court. That decision eliminated the "separate but equal" doctrine in our public school systems and ended what was one of the most abhorrent policies ever put in place in the United States.

"Today, education is perhaps the most important function of State and local governments. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the Armed Forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today, it is a principal instrument in awakening a child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity when the State has undertaken to provide it is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."

Mr. Speaker, these are the words that former Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered in his opinion of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case on May 17, 1954. These words still ring true today.

This Saturday will mark the 49th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, and sadly, Mr. Speaker, 49 years later, the promise of *Brown v. Board of Education* still has not been realized.

The State of our public education system is extremely fragile. Not only are we living in a society where our public schools are unequal, but we are living in a society, 49 years after the death of Jim Crow, where our students are still learning in separate environments.

In the 2000/2001 school year, at least half of the black students in the State of Maryland attended intensely segregated minority schools. A report released by the Harvard Civil Rights Project last year found that the city of Baltimore has the most segregated school system in the entire Nation; the